commercial banks, cooperative banks and regional rural banks. There is no specific plan for providing any specific amount of finance.

(b) and (c). A statement is enclosed.

STATEMENT

Details of various refinance facilities provided by the NABARD to State Cooperative Banks (SCBs) Regional Rural Banks/Commercial Banks are given below

State Cooperative Banks/District Central Cooperative Banks

- Production and Marketing activities of primary handloom/powerloom weavers societies.
- Procurement and marketing activities of apex weavers cooperative societies.

Regional Rural Banks

- Short term (working capital) limits to Regional Rural Banks for financing production and marketing activities of artisans (including handloom and powerloom weavers).

Commercial Banks

- NABARD provides short term (Working Capital) limits for financing Primary Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Societies in certain areas.

(ii) Investment Credit

- Refinance to banks for financing of acquisition of powerlooms.
- Refinance to SCBs for financing acquisition of powerlooms by weavers societies and individual weaver members of primary handloom/powerloom weavers' societies.
- Refinance to banks for financing modernisation/renovation/expansion/ diversification of existing powerlooms units.
- Refinance to banks for the modernisation of powerlooms under the scheme prepared by Manmade Textile Research Association (MANTRA).
- Refinance to Cooperative Banks and Commercial Banks for setting up/renovation/ modernisation of showroom/sales exporia by Apex Weavers Societies.

SIDBI's Special Scheme For Refinance to Powerloom Units

Terms loans granted by all eligible institutions to new grassroot powerloom units coming up in the small scale sector and not envisaging production of any items reserved for the Handloom sector, are eligible for refinance assistance from SIDBI, subject to the proposals satisfying the usual norms and parameters of SIDBI's Refinance Scheme. Assistance would also be available for modernisation and technology upgradation schemes of existing powerloom units.

SIDBI has introduced a special scheme in respect of assistance sanctioned by eligible institutions to the workers of National Textile Corporation (NTC) who opt for voluntary retirement. Under the scheme, assistance can be provided by primary lending institutions (PLIs) viz. State Financial Corporations, State Industrial Development Corporations, NTC for acquisition of 2 or 4 new looms for setting up of reeling units as co-operative societies by a group of such workers. In recognisation of the basic objectives to be fulfilled by this package, acquisition of old powerlooms from NTC by its workers has also been made eligible for refinance assistance from SIDBI.

Units in powerloom sector have to avail of the facility under SIDBI's schemes through PLIs. PLIs have been advised to consider proposals received from the powerloom units and avail of the refinance facility available to them against their term loans from SIDBI.

Setting up of Dry Port at Kandla

1160. SHRI PINAKI MISHRA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up a Dry Port at Kandla (Gujarat) to facilitate exports of agriculture and horticulture produce from Punjab and other Northern States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps taken by the Government to boost the export of these items through Kandla Port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c). An Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) is functioning in the Ministry of Commerce to provide single window clearance to the proposals for setting up of dry ports (Island Container Depots/Container Freight Stations (ICDs/CFSs). A proposal of Central Warehousing Corporation for setting up of a CFS at Kandla was cleared by the said IMC. The CFS at Kandla is in operation since March, 1996. The entire area can be utilised for stuffing agricultural and horticultural export commodities and various other commodities which are generated from the hinterland of Punjab & Haryana besides Delhi and Rajasthan.

Export of Cashew to Russia

1161. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Rusia is importing cashew from the country;

(b) if so, the total quantity exported to Russia during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Government have received any request from the Kerala State Cashew Development Corporation to export cashew to Russia;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any possibility to export additional quantity of cashew to that country;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total quantity of cashew kernels exported to Russia during each of the last three years has been as under :-

Year	Quantity (Tonnes)	Value (In Rs. Lakhs)
1993-94	5533	9231.73
1994-95	5516	9183.49
1995-96	13860	26205.35

(Source : DGCI&S, Calcutta)

(c) and (d). A request has been received from Government of Kerala that a portion of Russian orders for import of cashew kernels from India during 1996-97 be entrusted to the Kerala State Cashew Development Corporation at a mutually agreed terms and conditions.

(e) to (g). Cashew kernels are freely exportable to all countries including Russia against freely convertible currencies. However, following certain complaints, no ceiling has been fixed during 1996-97 for export of cashew kernels to Russia under the ESCROW Account/ Rupee Debt Repayment Mechanism. This issue will be taken up for discussion with the Government of Russia.

Decline in Export to U.K. and European Markets

1162. SHRI SOUMYA RANJAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the export of Indian goods to U.K. and European markets has reduced;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Government to increase the export of Indian goods to foreign markets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Fifteen products have been identified for undertaking special export promotion efforts so as to increase export of Indian goods to foreign markets. Some of the other supporting measures in this direction include participation in international trade fairs, intensified exchange of business delegations, supply of necessary information and extending necessary facilities to commercial organisations, setting up of warehousing facilities, promotion of joint ventures etc.

Opening of New Route for Export to Bangladesh

1163. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has received any request for opening of a new route for export of Indian goods to Bangladesh via Haldibari;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard; and

(c) the time by which the proposed route is likely to be opened in the interest of export of Indian goods to Bangladesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The Land Customs Station at Haldibari Railway Station is non-functional as there is no rail traffic on the Haldibari-Chilahati route on account of the absence of railway track for about ½Km on the Indian side and 5 Km. on the Bangladesh side. Government are considering the merits of the proposal to restore the missing rail link. Government are also examining the merits of the proposal to allow trade with Bangladesh through the Haldibari-Chilahati route, by road. It is however not possible to fix a definite time frame for opening the rail and road routes, at this stage.

Vacant Posts of C.M.D. in Banks

1164. SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL :
SHRI DINSHA PATEL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of Banks do not have their Chairmen-cum-Managing Directors;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the dates since when these posts have been lying vacant, bank-wise;

(c) the reasons for delay in appointing Chairman-cum-Managing Directors of these banks; and

(d) the time by which all such posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (d). The posts of Chairman and Managing Director are lying vacant in two